

CLAIMS

1. A structured surfactant composition capable of suspending solids which comprises surfactant, water and, if required, electrolyte in relative proportions adapted to form a flocculated, dispersed lamellar and/or spherulitic structured surfactant system, and, in addition, sufficient of a deflocculant to inhibit the flocculation of said system characterised in that said composition comprises an effective amount of an auxiliary stabiliser which is a substantially non-cross linked, water-soluble copolymer having a hydrophilic backbone and sufficient C₂₋₆ hydrophobic organic side chains to permit entanglement of the polymer chain.
2. A composition according to claim 1 wherein said auxiliary stabiliser is a copolymer of an unsaturated carboxylic or dicarboxylic acid having from 3 to 6 carbon atoms and a C₁ to 5 alkyl ester of such an acid.
3. A composition according to claim 2 wherein said acid is acrylic acid.
4. A composition according to either of claims 2 and 3 wherein said ester is an ethyl, propyl or butyl ester of said acid.
5. A composition according to any of claims 2 to 4 wherein the ratio of said acid to said ester is from 0.01 to 10.
6. A composition according to any foregoing claim wherein said auxiliary stabiliser is present in a amount of from 0.05 to 5% by weight of the composition.
7. A composition according to any foregoing claim which additionally contains from 0.01 to 10% by weight of the composition of a clay.

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8. A composition according to claim 7 wherein said clay is a water dispersible synthetic layer silicate.
9. An auxiliary stabiliser for deflocculated structured surfactants which comprised from 10 to 90% by weight of a copolymer having a hydrophilic backbone and C₂ to C₆ hydrophobic side chains, with from 90 to 10% by weight of a natural or synthetic clay.

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